

KEAR SAGA^{II}

The Newsletter Of The Kearsarge Association

ISSUE 24

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JAN, 2003

SCUTTLEBUTT

We say farewell and extend our sincere thanks to John Bennett for a job well done as President of the Association for the past four years. John, we salute you with the traditional Navy signal "Bravo Zulu" (Well Done).

We also greet our new President, George Beam, and thank him for agreeing to be our leader for the next two (or more) years. Let us show George our appreciation by cooperating with him in his endeavors to continuing our Association's journey towards excellence.

Our Past President's farewell message to the Association:

Those of you who couldn't make the San Francisco reunion missed a great time! The tours took us to the places most tourists want to see around the city, the location of the hotel made for easy access to cable car and bus transportation, and the weather was great. I would like to thank Bob Smeck (who is now sailing his boat in St. Thomas), Charles and Kristin Slater, and Noel and Joyce Binder, for all their help in making the reunion happen.

That said, I decided it's time for someone else to run the association. I've really enjoyed helping get the association to where it is today and as a bonus have become friends with many wonderful people along the way. However, I must admit that I am looking forward to sitting back and enjoying the association and reunions, without having to do anything!

Editor Czesak asked me if I ever had any anxious times with the association. I would have to say that one of my biggest fears was that more reunion attendees would show up for the dinner dance than I had planned for, all dressed up, with nowhere to sit and no food to eat. Thankfully that never occurred.

The bond of those who served on the Mighty Kay is a wonderful experience. I look forward to seeing you all in New Orleans!

COLUMBIA DISASTER

We grieve with the entire nation as a result of the break up of the shuttle COLUMBIA. As former crewmen and air group personnel we are familiar with the hazards that advanced technology can bring. The Astronauts, fully aware of the dangers of space flight, have bravely performed their missions. Our prayers are with the seven Columbia astronauts and our sincere sympathies are with their families. \

OCTOBER 2002 BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

The Business Meeting commenced at 1730, Thursday, 30 October. President John Bennett stated we need to bond the President's and the Treasurer's positions. The meeting was assisted by Robert Smeck, Vice President. The Treasurer's report is as follows:

"It appears our financial condition is solid. We have roughly 800 paid members in the Association. Paid dues membership for the last year, May 2001 was \$8,986.00. Ship's Store balance \$3,471.00. Our last reunion in Newport, RI cost us \$3000.00. As of April 2002 our balance stood at \$19,352.73."

A member brought up the subject of E-mail addresses for the organization. Currently we are not set up for this. A motion was made and passed that we look into the VFW web-site and how their E-mail systems work. We had a lengthy discussion on this topic. We went into suggestions for our 2006 reunion. It boiled down to Charleston, SC and Newport, RI. It appears we are having difficulty with members filling our organization's office positions. This makes it difficult to continue having reunions, as it appears no one wants to help out on reunions. This means helping our President and Vice President organize these reunions. If you are willing to assist us, please let our President, George Beam know!

Priority will be given to organize the 2006 reunion in Charleston, SC. If we run into logistical concerns, we will shift to Newport, RI.

Our next topic was filling our Association positions. Our new administration is as follows:

President	George Beam
Vice President	Ted Edington
Treasurer	John Work
Secretary	Bernie Rubaclava
Editor	Paul Czesak
Ship's Store	Vacant

Our membership graciously thanked our Past President John Bennett for all his tireless efforts with a standing ovation. We do appreciate all that John and his staff have done for us in these past few years. Thanks again, John. A motion was made to adjourn our meeting at 1830, as there was no further business. The motion was seconded and we voted to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted
Bernie Rubaclava (AMS2, V-6 Div, 57-59)

HELP WANTED

We desperately need a volunteer to take over the Ship's Store. Presently all of the stock is at John Bennett's and he needs the space. Are there any Store Keepers, Store Keeper Strikers or other Supply types, or anyone else that would like the job. Please let George Beam know if you are interested.

Also, several individuals have request an E-mail directory. We need someone skilled with MS Xcel and willing to maintain the list. If you are interested, let George Beam know. Meanwhile we will continue publishing E-mail address in the KearSaga as they are sent in to the Editor. (E-mail p.czesak@worldnet.att.net)

Reunion Reflections

By Paul and Ruth Young (FP3, R Div, 52-55)

The 2002 USS Kearsarge reunion was held in San Francisco October 28-31 and attended by about 100 men and their wives, families and friends. Our opening event was an evening buffet at the Golden Gateway Holiday Inn where the reunion was stationed. This was a good time of socializing, greeting old shipmates and friends and just settling in for the remainder of our reunion.

When we arrived on Monday a foggy San Francisco, but the remainder of the week was sunny, clear and warm which enhanced the reunion.

Tuesday morning we gathered about 9 A.M. for a 3-hour well-narrated bus tour of the San Francisco area which included stopping for a time at the base of the South end of the Golden Gate Bridge, lunch at one of the many restaurants at Fisherman's Wharf, and then a boat ride out to a very interesting tour of Alcatraz Island.

Wednesday morning we again boarded buses, this time for a tour through the wine country and stops at two of the vineyards (Viansa and Domaine Carneros). We had a lesson in wine tasting and then lunch at the Viansa Vineyard. At Domaine Carneros Winery we saw a film on winemaking and then viewed some of their facilities and the bottling of their wines. In the evening we ate dinner at a restaurant of our choice, and there were many good ones around the Golden Gateway Holiday Inn but some ventured out of the area to Chinatown. Then, later in the evening, the Kearsarge Association had a business meeting regarding its future and elected new officers while the Lady KAs met in the hospitality room and discussed their role at reunions.

Thursday morning we again boarded buses for a tour across the Golden Gate Bridge to Muir Woods and the viewing of more beautiful scenery in this area which included time to get out and do some walking. We stopped in Sausalito for lunch and shopping on our return trip to the hotel. Thursday evening there was a dinner dance at the hotel enjoyed by all.

As usual, the fellowship was the mainstay of the reunion, getting to see old friends and shipmates and becoming better acquainted with those from other divisions. Those attending came from the East coast (Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey, etc.), southwest (Texas, Arizona, etc.) and the West coast. Tentatively our next reunion will be in two years in New Orleans. At this time no one has stepped forward to coordinate/organize this reunion.

A CLOSE ENCOUNTER WITH DISASTER

Hi Paul,

Just now getting around to taking advantage of your offer to include my E-Mail add .in the KearSaga.It is mcrider@pe. net. I served aboard the mighty "K" from Oct.1947 Thru March1950. I was discharged as an RD3 and was in the inactive reserve for four years. Surprisingly I was not called up for duty during the Korean war. I was aboard that fateful night in 1948 when we lost that liberty boat in Norfolk bay the day before we were to sail on our Med Cruise. My buddies and I almost went ashore that day but it was so stormy and the bay so rough we decided to stay aboard and play cards. Who knows what our fate would have been. I was at the reunion in San Diego but there was no one from my division there. I am hoping to get to the coming one in San Francisco So-any one out there from the Radar Div. 1947-1950 Jim Kozak, Karl Lauter, Dick Scherer, any of you guys still alive and kicken out there? Also you can E- Mail now.

Thanks for this opportunity, Paul.

Herbert "Roy"Wielkie (RD3, OR Div, 47-50)

A LITTLE NOSTALGIA

Contributed by Charlie (Red Dog) Crookshanks (LTJG, V-7 Div, 53-56)

Subject: KINDA SAYS IT ALL

In years to come, when sailors are home from the sea, they will still remember with fondness and respect the ocean in all its moods - the impossible shimmering mirror calm and the storm-tossed green surging over the bow. And then there will come again a faint whiff of stack gas, a faint echo of engine and rudder orders, a vision of the bright bunting of signal flags snapping at the yardarm, a refrain of hearty laughter in the wardroom and chief's quarters and mess decks.

Gone ashore for good they will grow wistful about their Navy days, when the seas belonged to them and a new port of call was ever over the horizon.

(Nostalgia - Cont. from page) Remembering this, they will stand taller and say, "I was a Sailor. I was part of the Navy and the Navy will always be a part of me."

THE LUCKY BAG

Sonny Richardson continues to offer CDs based on his KEARSARGE experiences, as well as a new service. He sent in the following E-mail.

From: Sonny Richardson <hsrjr@insightbb.com>

To: <p.czesak@worldnet.att.net>

Subject: Kearsarge

Date: Saturday, January 04, 2003 3:01 PM

Kearsarge Cruise 1969-70

Hello it is Sonny again. I want to let you know that I have received slides of the 1969-1970 cruise. This is the last cruise that the Kearsarge made. It was the one where the Evans was cut in half. There are 406 pictures on this CD. No movies with this one. I am going to ask 15.00 dollars for this one. There are a lot of good pictures on it. Same thing as the last time. Just send me a check or money order for the 15.00 and I will ship it out the next day. Hope you all enjoy the CD. Thanks again for your support in getting the 68-69 cruise with the movies from me. I sure do hope that you enjoyed it AS MUCH AS I DID IN MAKING IT. Sure does bring back a lot of memories.

If you would like this in a jewel case with pictures of the Kearsarge on it and on the CD I will do that for 15.00 dollars extra. This includes all postage.

I will also scan your slides or pictures for 20 cents each for the first 100 then 10 cents for each one after that, with the option of offering them to others. I can also do home movies of the Kearsarge that you might have.

That would be for an extra fee.

Sonny Richardson

817 N. West St.

Lebanon, Indiana

46052

Home phone 765-482-2572

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E mail hsrjr@insightbb.com

A GUEST OF THE ARMY IN KOREA

The Korean War was still being fought when the KEARSARGE deployed from San Diego, heading for West Pac. After the usual visit to Pearl Harbor and the mandatory ORI we again resumed our journey, heading for Yokosuka. A couple days out, on 27 July, the Armistice with North Korea was announced, ending three years of very difficult, and frequently frustrating, combat for the Army and Marine troops.

After a brief port visit, the "Mighty K" and Air Group 11 made the first peacetime patrol off Korea. The planes continued to carry live ordinance and the Task Force was fully prepared should hostilities renew. Meanwhile, the Army was taking advantage of the armistice to improve living conditions for the troops, and to improve the results of close air support from the Navy.

Communicating target identification was one of the more serious problems faced by the Army in using Navy close air support. As a result, if the pilot did not correctly identify the specific target area he was to attack, he might attack a "target" he could see. This sometimes turned out to be an American position, and "friendly" fire casualties were the result.

To improve communications, the Army command invited 50 pilots from Air Group 11 to a five day visit to Korea for observing how the Army operates and to see the situation as it was on the ground. Five ship's company officers, one from each department, were also invited. Only two of us from Engineering (obviously naive Ensigns) were interested in going and I was fortunate to draw the short straw. (As I remember, LTJG S. W. "Dusty" Rhodes, Gunnery Dept and LTJG Mulvaney, Supply Dept also went along.)

Packing my foul weather jacket, long johns, and Navy wool sweater, proved wise. While the folks back home were generally enjoying typical Indian Summer weather, South Korea was getting a taste of winter cold coming down from Siberia.

By their standards, the Army had made tremendous strides in providing for the welfare and comfort of the troops. Tents had replaced fox holes, one hot meal a day was being served, and every effort was being made to allow each soldier to have one warm water shower each week. Laundries were set up, allowing the troops to have clean uniforms. Open air latrines (we would call them heads) were the norm and the tents were unheated. Quite a contrast from steam heat, three hot meals a day, plus mid rations, and a virtually unlimited supply of hot coffee all day long. They did have one bragging point - the troops could have one beer with their supper each night.

The Army also re-instituted saluting officers by the enlisted. Having become accustomed to having a cup of coffee handed to me as I walked into one of the R Division shops, I was taken aback by being saluted every place we went.

The Army proved to be a gracious host, sharing the best they had with us. We were given a tour of Army front line positions so that the pilots could see how our positions differed from those of the North Koreans. The pilots were frequently admonished to shoot where they were told to, and not to shoot at what they could easily see. Our positions were usually minimally camouflaged while the communist positions were cleverly concealed.

In addition to the visiting the front line at the 38th Parallel, where we tested our visual abilities in detecting Communist positions, we had a tour of the Chor Wan Valley and the capital, Seoul. The devastation in Seoul was unbelievable. From a distance, many of the buildings appeared intact. Close up, we could see that only walls remained with interiors completely gutted. It reminded me of London following the blitz in World War II.

The population appeared to have good morale, never the less. Of course, we saw numerous refugees who were obviously still suffering as a result of the war.

We were flown around in Lycoming L-19 observation planes, and the Army pilots took great pleasure in trying to scare us by flying up narrow, cliff lined, river valleys, some barely as wide as the plane's wing span. My ignorance of the hazards involved in flying allowed me to enjoy the trips rather than be frightened by them.

In addition to bringing back a new perspective on the war, I also came back with the knowledge, and satisfaction, that I had made the correct choice in choosing the Navy instead of the Army, and, I was happy to return "home" to the KEARSARGE.

P. J. Czesak - (R Div/MPA, 53-56)

MILITARY PAY ARTICLE

Contributed by Charlie "Red Dog" Crookshanks

On 12 Nov, Ms Cindy Williams (from Laverne and Shirley TV show) wrote a piece for the Washington Times, denouncing the pay raise(s) coming servicemembers' way this year -- citing that the stated 13% wage was more than they deserve. A young airman from Hill AFB responds to her article below. He ought to get a bonus for this!

"Ms Williams:

I just had the pleasure of reading your column, "Our GIs earn enough" and I am a bit confused. Frankly, I'm wondering where this vaunted overpayment is going, because as far as I can tell, it disappears every month between DFAS (The Defense Finance and Accounting Service) and my bank account. Checking my latest leave and earnings statement (LES), I see that I make \$1,117.80 before taxes. After taxes, I take home \$874.20. When I run that through Windows' Calculator, I come up with an annual salary of \$13,413.60 before taxes, and \$10,490.40 after.

I work in the Air Force Network Control Center (AFNCC), where I am part of the team responsible for the administration of a 5,000-host computer network. I am involved with infrastructure segments, specifically with Cisco Systems equipment. A quick check under jobs for Network Technicians in the Washington, D.C. area reveals a position in my career field, requiring three years experience with my job. Amazingly, this job does NOT pay \$13,413.60 a year, nor does it pay less than this. No, this job is being offered at \$70,000 to \$80,000 per annum. I'm sure you can draw the obvious conclusions.

Also, you tout increases to Basic Allowance for Housing and Basic Allowance for Subsistence (housing and food allowances, respectively) as being a further boon to an already overcompensated force. Again, I'm curious as to where this money has gone, as BAH and BAS were both slashed 15% in the Hill AFB area effective in January 00.

Given the tenor of your column, I would assume that you have NEVER had the pleasure of serving your country in her armed forces. Before you take it upon yourself to once more castigate congressional and DOD leadership for attempting to get the families in the military's lowest pay brackets off AFDC, WIC, and food stamps, I suggest that you join a group of deploying soldiers headed for AFGHANISTAN, I leave the choice of service branch up to you. Whatever choice you make, though, opt for the SIX month rotation: it will guarantee you the longest possible time away from your family and friends, thus giving you full "deployment experience."

As your group prepares to board the plane, make sure to note the spouses and children who are saying good-bye to their loved ones. Also take care to note that several families are still unsure of how they'll be able to make ends meet while the primary breadwinner is gone -- obviously they've been squandering the vast piles of cash the DOD has been giving them.

Try to deploy over a major holiday; Christmas and Thanksgiving are perennial favorites. And when you're actually over there, sitting in a DFP (Defensive Fire Position, the modern-day foxhole), shivering against the cold desert night; and the flight sergeant tells you that there aren't enough people on shift to relieve you for chow, remember this: trade whatever MRE (meal-ready-to-eat) you manage to get for the tuna noodle casserole or cheese tortellini, and add Tabasco to everything. This gives some flavor.

Talk to your loved ones as often as you are permitted; it won't nearly be long enough or often enough, but take what you can get and be thankful for it. You may have picked up on the fact that I disagree with most of the points you present in your op-ed piece.

But, tomorrow from KABUL, I will defend to the death your right to say it. You see, I am an American fighting man, a guarantor of your First Amendment rights and every other right you cherish. On a daily basis, my brother and sister soldiers worldwide ensure that you and people like you can thumb your collective nose at us, all on a salary that is nothing short of pitiful and under conditions that would make most people cringe.

We hemorrhage our best and brightest into the private sector because we can't offer the stability and pay of civilian companies. And you, Ms Williams, have the gall to say that we make more than we deserve?

Rubbish!

A1C Michael Bragg, Hill AFB AFNCC"

NAVAL CUSTOMS AND TRADITIONS

Tending the Side:

When a senior officer or official formally visits a Navy ship, he or she is normally "piped over the side" by a boatswains mate and a number of sideboys corresponding to the visitor's rank. This ritual is a throwback to the days when coming aboard a ship meant either climbing a rope ladder or being hoisted aboard in a boatswain's chair. Sideboys were mustered to assist if necessary in pulling the visitor bodily over the side. The tale goes that the more senior the officer, the greater the weight to be lifted, and accordingly more sideboys mustered. Sideboys were first formally prescribed in the U.S. Navy by the 1843 *Rules and Regulations*, but were provided from the very birth of the service.

The boatswain's mate passes the word "Lay to the quarterdeck the sideboys." The sideboys line up facing each other in two rows, with the boatswains mate positioned behind the outboard sideboy in the forward row. The Boatswain's mate pipes "alongside" when the boat reaches the accommodation ladder or the car arrives at the shore end of the brow. When the visitor's head appears at the level of the quarterdeck (or when he reaches a designated point on the accommodation ladder or brow) the boatswains mate begins piping "Over the Side" and he and the sideboys. And all others on the quarterdeck salute. The piping continues until the visitor has passed through the two rows of sideboys and is greeted by the officer of the deck; salutes are held throughout, as well as through musical honors and gun salute that may be rendered. The process is repeated when the visitor departs.

KEAR SAGA^{II}

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Dues & Membership

The yearly dues for the Kearsarge Association is \$10.

Check your label to see when your dues expire.

To pay your dues, send a check payable to *The Kearsarge Association* to John Work.

To sign up a new member, send information to John Work.

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